

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. **(currently amended):** An isolated ~~lactic acid bacterial strain belonging to the genus *Lactococcus* and isolated from human stool, wherein the bacterial strain is *Lactococcus garvieae* 20-92 deposited under FERM BP-10036 and the bacterial strain has an ability to utilize at least one daidzein compound selected from the group consisting of daidzein glycosides, daidzein, and dihydrodaidzein to produce equol.~~

2.-3. **(canceled).**

4. **(currently amended):** A composition comprising the isolated *Lactococcus garvieae* 20-92 ~~lactic acid bacterial strain belonging to the genus *Lactococcus*~~ according to Claim 1 and at least one member selected from the group consisting of daidzein compounds and daidzein compound-containing ingredients.

5. **(original):** The composition according to Claim 4, wherein the daidzein compound-containing ingredient is soybean flour or soy milk.

6. **(original):** The composition according to Claim 4 which is in the form of a beverage or a milk product.

7. **(original):** The composition according to Claim 4 further comprising equol.
8. **(original):** The composition according to Claim 7 which is in the form of a fermentation product of soy milk.
9. **(withdrawn-currently amended):** A method of producing equol comprising the step of letting ~~an the isolated lactic acid bacterial strain belonging to the genus *Lactococcus* and isolated from human stool, wherein the bacterial strain is *Lactococcus garvieae* 20-92 deposited under FERM BP-10036 and the bacterial strain has an ability to utilize a daidzein compound to produce equol,~~ according to Claim 1 act on at least one member selected from the group consisting of daidzein compounds and daidzein compound-containing ingredients.
10. -11. **(canceled).**
12. **(withdrawn):** The method according to Claim 9, wherein the daidzein compound-containing ingredient is soybean flour or soy milk.
13. **(canceled).**
14. **(currently amended):** A composition comprising the isolated ~~lactic acid bacterial strain belonging to *Lactococcus garvieae* 20-92~~ according to Claim 1 and an edible or pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

15. (canceled).